

REMARKS

Applicants submit this Amendment in reply to the Final Office Action mailed June 27, 2007. At the outset, Applicants propose to cancel claims 33, 40, and 47, amend claims 34, 41, and 48 in accordance with the Examiner's suggestion (*See* Final Office Action, pg. 8), and amend claims 35, 36, 42, 43, 49, and 50 to change their dependency.

The originally-filed specification, claims, abstract, and drawings fully support the proposed amendments to claims 34-36, 41-43, and 48-50. In particular, support for the amended subject matter may be found on page 17, lines 15-29 of the specification.

In the Final Office Action dated June 27, 2007 the Examiner rejected claims 33-53 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph; rejected claims 33, 34, 40, 41, 47 and 48 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 2,770,013 to Crooker ("Crooker") in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,504,414 to Breen ("Breen") and optionally in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,234,326 to Galli et al. ("Galli"); rejected claims 35-37, 42-44 and 49-51 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Crooker in view of Breen and optionally Galli, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 2,121,956 to Eger ("Eger"); and rejected claims 35-39, 42-46 and 49-53 as being unpatentable over Crooker in view of Breen and optionally Galli, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 2,808,621 to Torrey ("Torrey").

While Applicants do not agree with these rejections, in order to further prosecution, Applicants propose to cancel claims 33, 40, and 47 and amend claims 34, 41, and 48 placing them in independent form and in accordance with the Examiner's suggestion of allowable subject matter. Applicants also note that claims 34, 41, and 48 do not contain the limitation "the retaining means is separate from the plurality of studs when the mould is closed" and therefore should overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112 set forth in the Final Office Action.

Therefore, these rejections are now moot, and this application should be in condition for allowance.

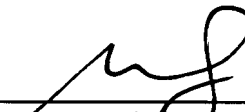
Applicants respectfully request that this Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 be entered by the Examiner, placing claims 34-39, 41-46, and 49-53 in condition for allowance. Applicants submit that the proposed amendments of claims 34-36, 41-43, and 48-50 do not raise new issues or necessitate the undertaking of any additional search of the art by the Examiner. Rather, as noted above, Applicants' proposed changes to claims 34, 41, and 48 are directed toward subject matter which the Examiner indicated was allowable. Accordingly, Applicants' proposed claim amendments place this application in condition for allowance and should allow for immediate action by the Examiner. Applicants therefore request entry of this amendment and a timely allowance of the pending claims.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

FINNEGAN, HENDERSON, FARABOW,
GARRETT & DUNNER, L.L.P.

Dated: September 26, 2007

By: 
Meredith H. Schoenfeld
Reg. No. 52,418